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California Polytechnic State University

Nov. 13, 2003

Contact: Jo Ann Lloyd
(805) 756-1511

TIP SHEET

In light of the recent fires in Southern California, we have put together a list of Cal Poly experts whom you could contact when preparing a story about various aspects of the fires and the damage they caused, as well as rebuilding efforts.

If you need additional information, please contact Jo Ann Lloyd at 756-1511.

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Doug Piirto, Professor of Forestry

Department Head, Natural Resources Management Department

Areas of expertise: Silviculture practices, forest protection and products, pest management, fire ecology and environmental impact analysis

Phone numbers: (805) 756-2968; (805) 756-2702

E-mail: dpiirto@calpoly.edu

Piirto is the author of 10 textbook study guides, two detailed Web-page-enhanced courses, and more than 87 articles and reports. He is a registered professional forester in California and a Forest Service-certified silviculturist. He serves as the forestry project director for Cal Poly's Swanton Pacific Ranch (near Santa Cruz). He also serves as an expert witness for congressional and state legislative committees. He participated and presented papers at the 2000 National Fire Conference, in the 1996 Tall Timbers Fire Ecology Conference. His research projects involve fire/pathogen interactions. He is co-authoring "The Wheeler Fire in Retrospect: Factors Affecting Fire Spread and Perimeter Formation" for publication in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Experiment Station, Berkeley, California. He also co-authored "Cost-Effective Fire Management: A Case Study in Southern California," which appeared in the 1990 Proceedings for the Fire and the Environment Symposium, and "Cost-Effective Fire Management: A Case Study in Southern California," which was published in the 1990 Proceedings for the Fire and the Environment Symposium.

Chris Dicus, Assistant Professor

Natural Resources Management Department

Area of expertise: Wildland fire and fuels management

Phone numbers: work (805) 756-5104; home (805) 528-8712

E-mail: cdicus@calpoly.edu

Dicus has a Ph.D. in forestry (silviculture and forest ecology) from LSU. He heads the wildland fire and fuels management concentration in the forestry and natural resources major at Cal Poly. He teaches six classes in various aspects of fire ecology and management, including the capstone course, wildland-urban

interface fire protection. Currently he is investigating the tradeoffs between benefits derived from vegetation covering the wildland-urban interface and the risk of wildfire from that same vegetation. He serves on the board of directors of the San Luis Obispo County FireSafe Council and is active in the Fire Working Group of the Society of American Foresters.

Brian Dietterick, Associate Professor
Natural Resources Management Department
Area of expertise: Hydrology/watershed management
Phone number: (805) 756-6155
E-mail: Bdietter@calpoly.edu

Dietterick teaches watershed management, forest and range hydrology, geographic information systems, and watershed protection. Research interests include the effects of climate change on water resources, hydrologic modeling, monitoring and modeling the effects of land use on hydrologic systems, and watershed and channel restoration/rehabilitation for aquatic habitat and erosion prevention purposes.

William Siembieda, Department Head, City and Regional Planning
Area of expertise: Land use planning, disaster mitigation planning
Phone numbers: work (805) 756-1315; home (805) 556-0456
E-mail: wsiembe@calpoly.edu

Siembeida earned a doctorate in urban planning from UCLA. He has written extensively about disaster recovery. He served as workshop leader and lead organizer for a 2000 Post Disaster Training Needs Assessment Workshop, for which he assembled academic and agency personnel from seven Latin America and Caribbean countries to assess post-disaster training needs in their respective countries.

Richard P. Thompson, Professor
Natural Resources Management Department
Area of expertise: Natural resource economics and policy
Phone number: (805) 756-2898
E-mail: rpthomps@calpoly.edu

Thompson is a professor of natural resources economics and policy. He earned a B.S. in forest management, a master's degree in forest economics from Oklahoma State University, and a doctorate in natural resources economics from Texas A&M University. He is a licensed forester in California and Oklahoma with more than 20 years of experience in industry, consulting and research. His current research interests include uneven-aged forest management, urban and community forestry, and forest ecosystem management.

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Cal Poly Public Affairs
California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

805.756.7266

polynews@calpoly.edu